

HUMPTY DUMPTY – A SYMPHYTUM CASE

Male, 29, average height, quite over weight for height, fair, early hair loss. Presently not working but family is wealthy and he is not sure about working in family business - taking his time to decide. Comes across as very intelligent, somewhat superior attitude which melted a bit during case taking. Likes to 'use' language, flamboyant use of words when really not necessary. Dressed in much the same manner (shirt with little flowers on) and an unusual green suit.

Presenting complaint - "My life is falling apart" + diarrhoea

diarrhoea can come on at any time
at least 2-3 times a day (never night time)
sometimes has a bit of blood in stool, otherwise just loose, soft, normal colour
anus itches after stool (possible bleeding haemorrhoids inside)
some pain in abdomen before stool but not always
pain is anxious, tight, pulling (used many other non-repertorisable words)
doesn't seem to be << or >> by any food or drink
craves still water or watered down fruit juice
no strong food cravings or aversions
very little else to tell me about diarrhoea

his life is falling apart because he has lost his girl friend of 3 years.

a year previous they were on a ski trip together - he had a bad accident and broke bones in 3 places in right leg and right wrist - he was treated well in a local hospital with follow ups in UK. Healing took time but he was given the all clear but the pain continued, (although this was not the reason he came to see me).

pain not only in leg but also in the back - aches, sometimes tingling, cannot sit for long periods of time, pain seems to stick to one place i.e. doesn't move around or radiate, << round knee area, leg feels cold to touch >> hard rubbing leg (but he has to do this, doesn't like anyone else doing it), and back is >> warmth.

relationship with partner was intense, passionate, sexual - he was very much in love - she abandoned him when he was in hospital, gone off with someone else - it was so sudden and unbelievable to him that it should happen, that she should leave him - no warning.

since then everything has been falling apart - doesn't know what to do with his life, cannot make decisions, cannot bring it all together, doesn't know what direction to go in, feels pulled in many directions, father wants him to work with him (furniture business), is getting angry with son for not getting his act together, his friends keep telling him the same thing "pull yourself together"

has many academic qualifications but doesn't know what to do with them

feels that he is all over the place but not achieving anything - he is just sitting around "navel gazing" but then gets agitated with all this

had periods of very itchy skin as a teenager, especially in summer, "felt as though I had been tickled with bristles" - scratched a lot but no eruption, disappeared of its own accord.

rather difficult to get more from him

This case came to me at the end of a day and I chose NOT to repertorise or prescribe there and then. I took time out to think about what was the diseased state that needed curing.

I began thinking about "falling to pieces" - Lac Can; Lob; Thuja; Phos; etc but I knew he was none of these. The case did not seem to go beyond the injury to the bones and I went straight to Symphytum - mainly because I had closeted this remedy as being useful only for broken bones. And it is so wrong to do this - helpful, initially, when we begin to learn our Materia Medica but very limiting in the long run.

I could hardly believe that Symphytum covered the case so well. I prescribed Symphytum 1m without doing any repertorisation - the analysis came afterwards.

The client went on to a remarkable recovery, swiftly with no aggravations or disturbance, 'got his life back together' and took off to enjoy it. Over a period of 3 months he had a new partner, they had begun their own travel business, all bone

pains disappeared and the diarrhea cleared up almost immediately.

On reflection, there were parts of this case which were not to be included in the 'needing to be cured' picture - the flamboyant language (more of that later), the clothes he wore, the early hair loss (Symphytum does contain Silicea which might be an angle on this), the itching skin (Symphytum has really hairy leaves and if you touch it too much, although those hairs are soft, they leave the skin red and sore and very itchy to those who might be susceptible), the passionate and sexual level of his love. His hair did not change but he was not concerned about this, even considered it quite trendy and he has not since had a return of the itchy skin sx. He didn't choose to talk too much about his relationship except that it was highly sexual and passionate and Symphytum does have ailments from sexual excess - this was part of his sense of loss.

Symphytum is all about killing pain and it might be physical or emotional pain. (I always take that liberty of extending physical pain into emotional pain.) The injuries or wounds are not from incisions or lacerations (as in Calendula and other remedies) but from blows, blunt instruments and have most effect on the soft parts.

Symphytum also has an affinity to broken bones, bone cancers, skin ulcers, gastric and intestinal ulcers (draws off decaying tissues), haemorrhages and bruising, eye injuries, suppressed menses, ailments from sexual excess, inguinal hernia, skin and other parts has pricking pains, dysentery like diarrhoea, haemorrhoids, defluxions of the lungs and

spitting of blood. Loves water - very thirsty. Contains Silicea and Gallic acid which might give its connection to the lungs and blood.

Symphytum is about CONSOLIDATION, knitting life back together and I couldn't but help making an analogy with a famous nursery rhyme:-

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall
All the King's horses and all the King's men
Couldn't put Humpty together again

Most of us will be familiar with this nursery rhyme, unfortunately the origins actually refer to either a powerful cannon used during the English Civil War which was tumbled to the ground by the Royalists and couldn't be repaired, or to King Richard III who suffered from some kind of Scoliosis and he was slain where he lay when he fell from his horse and no-one was able to help him. Also the term humpty was often given to people who were of portly stature. But it is Charles Dodgson's use of Humpty Dumpty which gets to be really interesting.

Generally thought of as being haughty (high up on the wall and looking down on people - but from great heights you can only fall downwards), intellectual and an obnoxious egghead, it was Humpty's use of language with Alice which fascinated me..."When I use a word", Humpty said, in a rather scornful tone, "it means just what I choose it to mean, neither more nor less."

Alice then goes on to ask Humpty what the meaning of the poem Jabberwocky is.

'Twas brillig, and the slithy toves
Did gyre and gimble in the wabe:
All mimsy were the borogoves,
And the mome raths outgrabe.

My client wasn't quite of this calibre with his flowery language but it had me thinking about the possible intellectual and emotional affinities to Symphytum. I really don't know of many deep emotional symptoms which emerge from the meagre? proving but Symphytum also has a history of being useful for many pulmonary diseases and there is often thought to be a link with the emotions and the lungs.

I think I found the remedy partly by chance and partly by homing in on the 'origin' of the case and not being flustered by what to rep, how to rep, or being drawn into the richness of what stood outside of the case, like the language and clothes. Normally I would give high grading to such aspects. It is very easy to get carried away with repertorisation but it has to be factual, pertain to the diseased state and not the healthy state, and be kept simple.

I always try to take a case back to its origins - by this I mean take it to where it really begins. I will always give importance to tendencies towards certain conditions before that time as this can be clues as to the general miasmatic influence, but I try to put a circle around the case and contain it. In this case, although there were family problems,

possibly the ease of wealth could have been contributing and there was skin sx in the background, this case began with the broken bones - who knows what would have happened if that accident had not occurred.

Humpty was considered to be an obnoxious intellectual egghead - unfortunately I couldn't find any connection with Symphytum to eggs!!

>

Finally, from Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll),

"Alice waited a minute to see if Humpty would speak again, but, as he never opened his eyes or took any further notice her, she said 'Good-bye!' once more, and, getting no answer to this, she quietly walked away: but she couldn't help saying to herself, as she went, 'of all the unsatisfactory...' (she repeated this aloud, as it was a great comfort to have such a long word to say) 'of all the unsatisfactory people I ever met...' she never finished the sentence, for at this moment a heavy crash shook the forest from end to end.!"

Thanks for reading. Joy Lucas RSHom